

RUTIA BOSTAGED



10[¢]

GINSBURG

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Work in Progress — Fifth Column Series
(Preliminary Study, 2025)

This document gathers the current state of an ongoing experiment — a live, evolving series exploring how recent American history might be reflected through the lens of classic U.S. postage design. What began as a single idea has grown into a sequence of sketches, each one testing tone, color, composition, and narrative balance.

These images and accompanying “press releases” are presented as *working studies*, not finished works. Each is a step in a process of discovery — an open, public experiment first developed as a series of Facebook posts, where the design and language evolved in real time. The intention is not simply to complete a series of commemorative stamps, but to explore where ideas come from: how meaning forms through trial, iteration, and collective reflection.

At this stage, many of the colors, denominations, and texts remain provisional. Future versions may refine or reimagine them, or perhaps the work will remain in this unfinished state — a record of process rather than product. What matters here is not resolution, but exploration: tracing the movement of thought as it becomes visible.

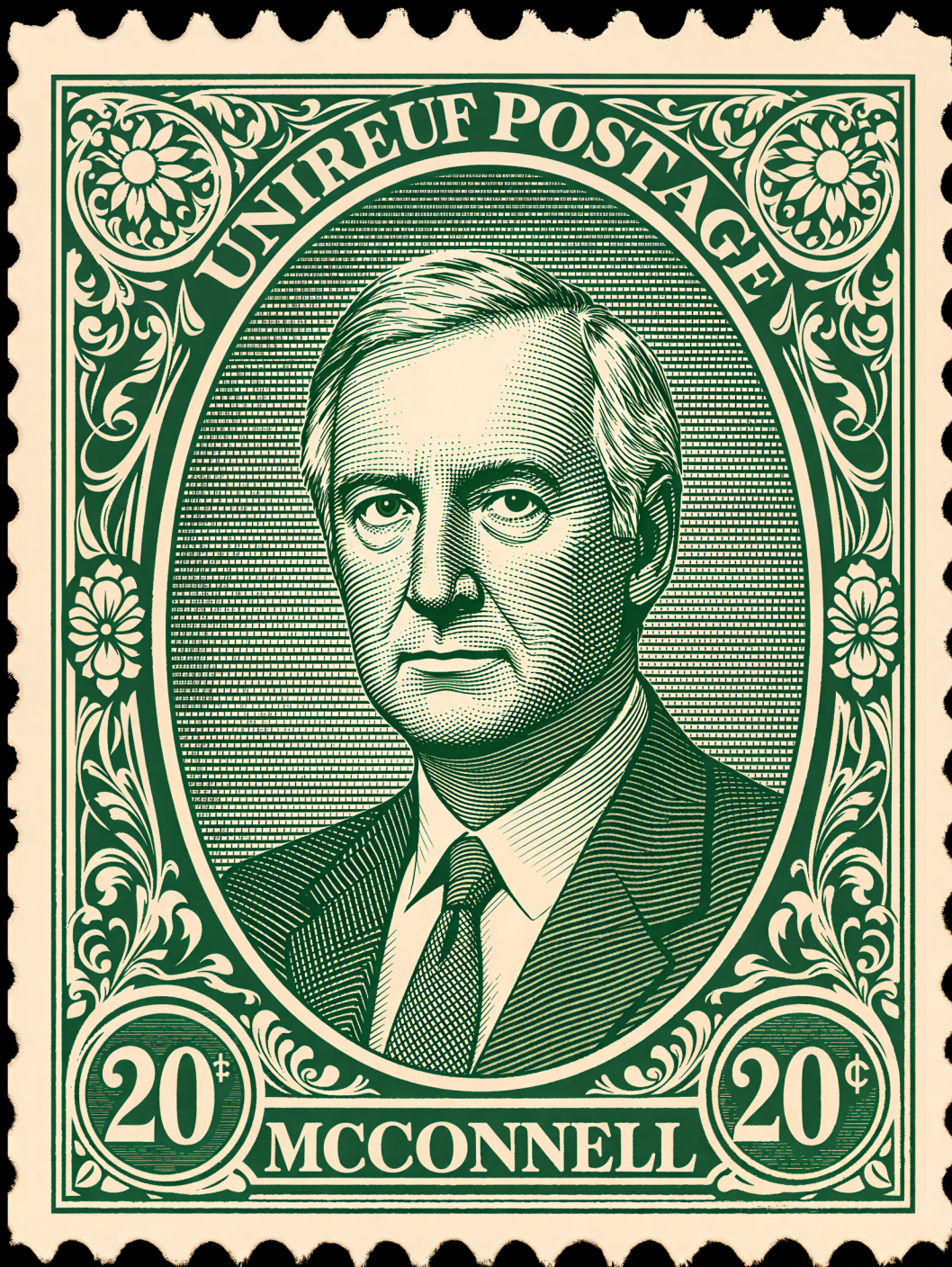


10¢ Ruth Bader Ginsburg

A new series inspired by the Fourth Bureau Issue of U.S. Postage Stamps (1922–1933). This version is called the Fifth Column Series.

This first design represents the lowest denomination of the set: 10¢ Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Please keep in mind this is a work in progress. These are just initial concepts, and there will be plenty of AI quirks and mistakes along the way. Hopefully that helps people understand I'm not trying to fool anyone. I'm leaving them visible — this is not a finished product, just concept work I'm sharing here.

Work in progress again. More images will follow. You might be surprised.



20¢ Mitch McConnell

And next up, Mitch McConnell. The 20 cent stamp in the Fifth Column Series – Work in Progress.



NTV 18280S

30¢ Nancy Pelosi

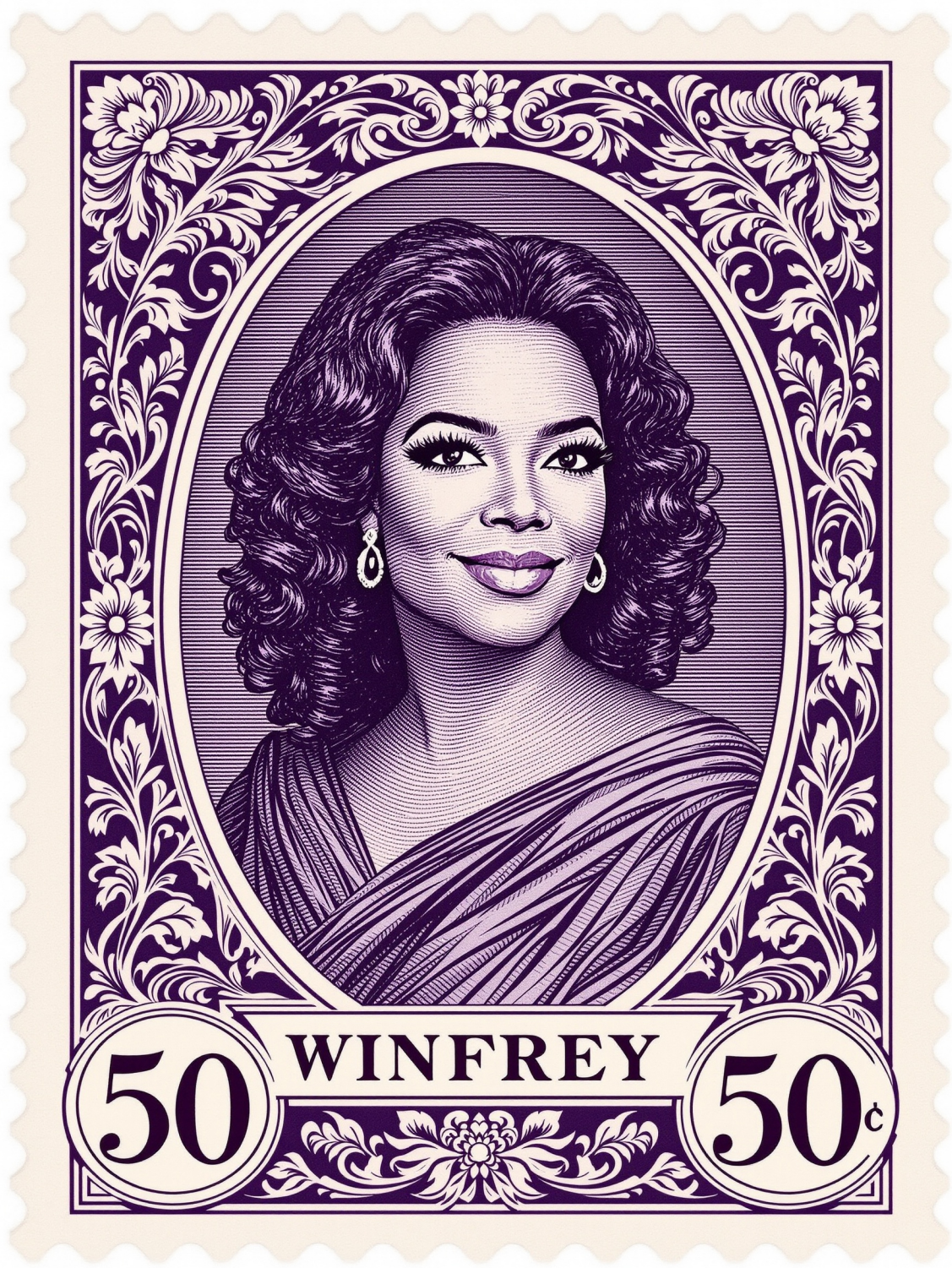
And moving up in increasing demoninations. Nancy Pelosi. 30 cents.



40¢ Beyoncé

And landing fourth on the chart in increasing denominations is Beyoncé at 40 cents. Remember, this is an AI-generated work in progress, so expect a few glitches. I'm not trying to fool anyone, and am trying to work fast—so no need for alarm.

I'd love some feedback: should this reverse countdown play out like a twist on the old Casey Kasem's Top 40—only in reverse order? There are still 20 more to go.



50

WINFREY

50c

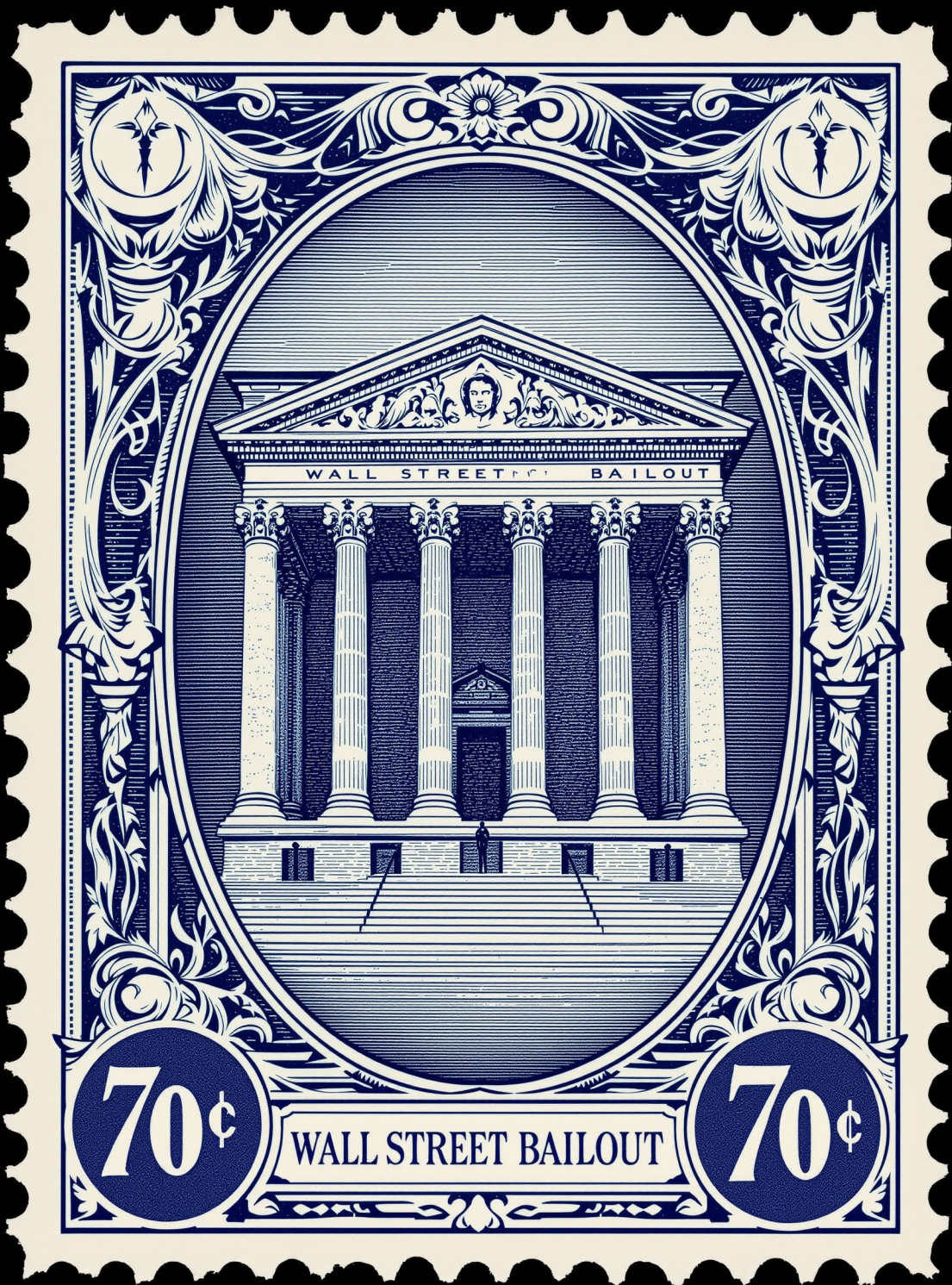
50¢ Oprah Winfrey

Next up in the reverse countdown is the 50¢ stamp, part of The Fifth Column Series, a reimagined set of U.S. postage stamps. This is a lengthy issue of 24 designs, moving from portraits into major events and locations as the denominations rise. Oprah Winfrey appears here as number five in the sequence, designed in the style of classic U.S. postage issues and grounded in the historic traditions of American stamp engraving. (And a work in progress - there will be mistakes.)



60¢ Taylor Swift

Here's the next stamp in the series, moving up in denomination — or demonization, (thank you Natasha) as we might soon find out. This one features iconic Taylor Swift. Just a heads-up: the series is about to take an abrupt turn. There are 20 more to go, each with increasing value in defining who we are as a society. This isn't about celebration or pride — not everything here deserves a pedestal. It's about recognition, about facing who we are without flinching. That's the spirit of this Fifth Column series, modeled after the U.S. commemorative stamps that once marked historic events, but turned here toward a more unsettling purpose. Where are we right now, in the middle of all this turmoil? This project is meant to capture the contradictions of the present moment — a hard look in the mirror, a reflection of ourselves. Who we really are as a society. It's a work in progress - there will be mistakes



70¢ Wall Street Bailout

Wall Street Bailout (2008) – 70¢. From the Fifth Column Series.

Issued to mark the U.S. government's unprecedented rescue of major banks and financial institutions during the 2008 financial crisis, when the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act authorized hundreds of billions to prevent systemic collapse. The program stabilized markets but at the cost of widening inequities, as losses fell heavily on homeowners and wage earners while Wall Street recovered. Its legacy endures in new regulations, lingering distrust, and a lasting shift in the balance between public risk and private gain.

SANDY HOOK



FOREVER
ONCE

Forever Sandy Hook

Next in the series. Forever Once.

UNITED STATES POSTAGE



LAS VEGAS

90¢

MASS SHOOTING

90¢

90¢ Las Vegas Mass Shooting

Las Vegas Mass Shooting (2017) – 90¢. From the Fifth Column Series.

Issued to acknowledge the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history, when a gunman opened fire on a crowd attending the Route 91 Harvest music festival from a high-rise hotel room overlooking the Las Vegas Strip. Fifty-eight people were killed that night, and hundreds more were injured, in a burst of violence that shocked the nation and reignited debates over gun laws, public safety, and the limits of freedom. The event became a symbol of both horror and unresolved divisions, leaving behind memorials, survivors' stories, and a national reckoning that continues today.

(Work in progress — there will be mistakes. This series is modeled after historic U.S. commemorative issues but turned toward the contradictions of the present. These designs are not finished products, just concepts, shown openly with their glitches and imperfections.)



\$1 Jeff Bezos

Jeff Bezos / Amazon (2000s–2020s) – \$1
From the Fifth Column Series.

Issued to acknowledge the rise of Amazon and its founder Jeff Bezos, whose company reshaped commerce, logistics, publishing, and cloud computing. What began as an online bookseller expanded into a global marketplace and infrastructure backbone, altering how Americans work, shop, and live. Bezos became, for a time, the richest man in the world — a symbol of innovation, scale, and the new economy.

This stamp reflects both achievement and consequence: the transformation of retail, the acceleration of digital services, and the spread of a model built on speed, scale, and efficiency. It is not a celebration or a critique, but a hard look in the mirror — a reminder that the story of Amazon is also the story of who we are, and what we chose to become in the early 21st century.

(Work in progress — these designs are modeled after historic U.S. commemorative issues but turned toward the contradictions of the present. They are not finished products, just concepts, shown openly with their glitches and imperfections.)



\$2 Hurrican Katrina

Hurricane Katrina (2005) – \$2. From the Fifth Column Series.

Issued to acknowledge one of the most destructive natural disasters in modern U.S. history. Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast in August 2005, causing widespread flooding after levees failed in New Orleans. More than 1,800 lives were lost, hundreds of thousands were displaced, and entire neighborhoods were destroyed. The disaster placed extraordinary demands on emergency response at local, state, and federal levels, and revealed the vulnerability of critical infrastructure. Recovery efforts drew national and international attention, as volunteers, faith groups, and organizations—including President Jimmy Carter’s Habitat for Humanity—joined long-term rebuilding projects.

This stamp is not a celebration but a reflection—a mirror held up to who we are as a society. It acknowledges both the scale of loss and the resilience shown in the aftermath.

This is one image in a cycle of twenty-seven. Number 11 in sequence. This design was particularly uncooperative: repeated errors in spelling and text reveal the difficulty of rendering such a moment through historic forms. As with the others, this remains a work in progress, to be fine-tuned once the full set can be seen together.



\$3 Elon Musk

Elon Musk – \$3. From the Fifth Column Series.

Issued to acknowledge one of the most prominent and polarizing figures in early 21st-century America. Elon Musk rose to international visibility through ventures in electric vehicles, private spaceflight, and digital platforms. His work with Tesla accelerated the mainstreaming of electric cars, while SpaceX reshaped expectations for commercial access to space. Musk's acquisition and reshaping of social media deepened debates about free speech, responsibility, and influence in the digital age.

This stamp is not an endorsement but a record — a recognition of how individual ambition can shape culture, economics, and public discourse. It reflects both admiration and unease, capturing a figure whose impact on technology and society will be debated for decades to come.

This is one image in a cycle of twenty-seven. Number 12 in sequence.



\$4 Joe Biden

Joe Biden – \$4. From the Fifth Column Series.

Issued to mark the presidency of Joseph R. Biden Jr., the 46th president of the United States. His term followed a period of unprecedented political division and the global upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic. Biden's administration is associated with efforts to restore alliances abroad, expand federal investment in infrastructure and clean energy, and navigate domestic debates over public health, the economy, and the limits of executive power.

This issue reflects his place in the national arc as a figure of presidential leadership during a transitional era. The stamp acknowledges his role within the larger sweep of events shaping the United States in the early 21st century.

This is one image in a cycle of twenty-eight. Number 13 in sequence. As with the others, this remains a work in progress—these preliminary drafts that will most likely be refined once the entire set can be seen together.



\$5 Gun Violence in America

\$5 Gun Violence in America

Issued in engraved navy blue, this \$5 definitive confronts the nation with an unflinching truth. The design is not offered in celebration, but as reflection: a mirror held up to the American character.

Each year, more than 40,000 lives are lost to gunfire in the United States. No other developed nation endures such a relentless toll. The persistence of gun violence here is not an aberration but a defining feature of our national life.

This issue acknowledges that reality without sentiment or excuse. It is neither political nor partisan. It is documentary. To own this stamp is to accept what it represents: that gun violence is not merely an episode in American history, but a measure of who we are.

This issue is part of the American Issues Series, known also as the Fifth Column Series—recording the truths we carry as a nation.



\$10 Barack Obama

\$10 Barack Obama

Issued as part of the Fifth Column Series: American Issues

The Barack Obama stamp marks the historic presidency of the 44th President of the United States, the first African American to hold the office. His election in 2008 symbolized a profound shift in the nation's identity, embodying both the aspirations and divisions of an era. Over the course of two terms, Obama presided during the aftermath of the Great Recession, advanced health care reform, expanded recognition of marriage equality, and redefined America's role on the global stage. His tenure reflected the evolving face of the United States: more diverse, more connected, yet also more polarized.

This issue does not attempt to praise or condemn but to acknowledge Obama's enduring influence on the national psyche. His presidency, celebrated by some as a fulfillment of long-deferred hopes and critiqued by others as emblematic of new divides, remains one of the defining markers of the early 21st century.

The design recalls the tradition of Bureau of Engraving portraiture, situating Obama within the lineage of leaders whose presence shaped the American experiment. This stamp is part of the Fifth Column Series, a collection created to present an unflinching record of the forces and figures that have defined the nation.

Fifth Column Series – A work in progress.



\$20 Donald J. Trump

Donald J. Trump (45th and 47th President of the United States) – \$20

This issue from the Fifth Column Series reflects one of the most polarizing presidencies in American history. Donald Trump, serving from 2017 to 2021 and again beginning in 2025, reshaped U.S. trade policy, appointed three Supreme Court justices, and advanced an “America First” agenda that redefined the nation’s approach to international agreements, immigration, and domestic regulation. His presidency galvanized a large and loyal base of supporters, particularly across rural and working-class communities, while challenging long-standing political and institutional norms.

Trump is also the only U.S. president to have been impeached twice and later indicted on more than 90 criminal counts at the state and federal level, with civil courts further finding him liable for sexual abuse and defamation. These developments underscored the extraordinary degree to which his leadership tested the durability of U.S. institutions and deepened cultural and partisan divides.

This issue, part of the Fifth Column Series, does not celebrate but reflects. It is not abstract—it belongs to all of us. It stands as a mirror, insisting that we recognize ourselves in it: our choices, our conflicts, our endurance. It is a reminder that, however unsettling, this too defines who we are.



\$25 January 6

January 6 – \$25

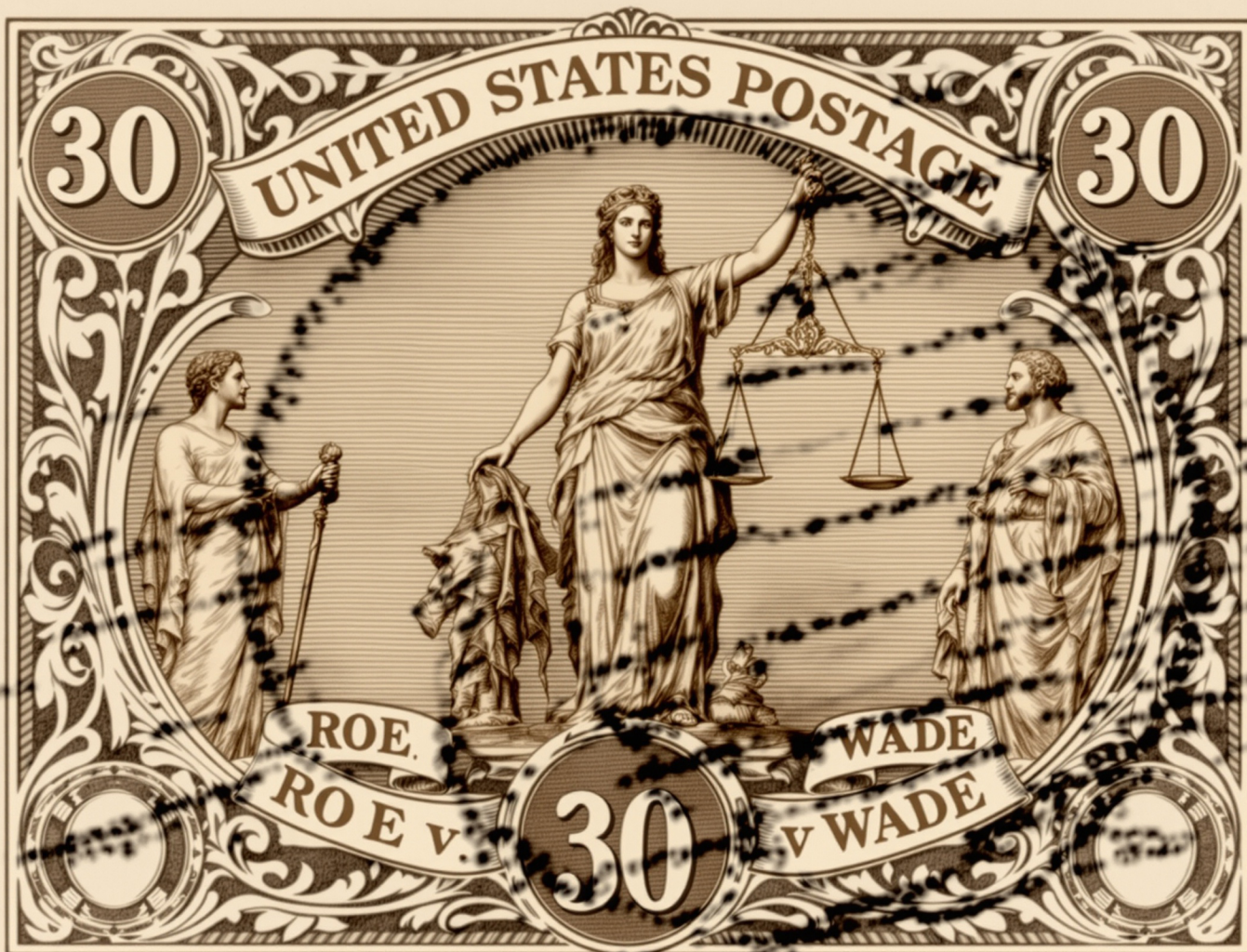
The United States Postal Service issues this \$25 stamp as part of the ongoing Fifth Column Series, a collection devoted to moments that have profoundly shaped the nation's conscience. On January 6, 2021, the U.S. Capitol — long a symbol of democratic continuity — became the site of unprecedented upheaval as a crowd forced its way past barriers and into the halls of Congress.

To some, the events of that day embodied protest and resistance, a last-ditch cry of political frustration. To others, it was an attack on the Constitution itself, where violence and the nation's most sacred symbols were turned against the very institutions they were meant to uphold. The image of the American flag, wielded not as a banner of unity but as a weapon, remains one of the defining emblems of that rupture.

The Fifth Column Series does not romanticize; it reflects. Each issue insists that we recognize ourselves within it: our choices, our conflicts, our endurance. January 6 stands here not as nostalgia, but as a brutal reflection of our acceptance of who we are.

Note: This entire series remains a work in progress. What we are seeing here are rough drafts of each issue. Once the series is complete, I will return to fine-tune the collection as a whole. I am paying close attention to all comments, which may be incorporated into the final work. Yes, this is being designed in real time on Facebook.

This particular image proved especially complicated. I had to wrestle with the AI tool repeatedly to arrive at an acceptable depiction. For reasons unclear, the concept resisted straightforward execution, requiring extra effort to bring it into focus. There are built-in filters that censor content — though almost never explained by AI. Wild. I am using not just one AI tool, but several in combination.



\$30 Roe v. Wade Pre-Cancelled Issue

\$30 Commemorative — Roe v. Wade (Pre-Cancelled Issue)

Issued in the ornate engraved style of the 1922 Bureau Issues, this \$30 commemorative depicts the Scales of Justice flanked by allegorical figures symbolizing liberty and law. For the first time, the United States Postal Service has authorized a design issued in pre-cancelled form, underscoring the historic significance of the Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v. Wade.

To many, the decision marked a restoration of constitutional interpretation to the states and a correction of judicial overreach. To others, it represented a profound loss of individual freedom and the narrowing of rights relied upon for half a century.

This stamp is not a celebration, but an acknowledgment — a mirror held up to reflect who we are, and the simple, stark realities we have come to accept within our laws and institutions



\$40 Social Movements of a Generation

Social Movements of a Generation — Block of Four, \$40

This block of four stamps recognizes pivotal social movements that have shaped recent American life: Black Lives Matter, marriage equality, the MeToo movement, and Dreamers/immigration. Each design reflects both the progress celebrated by many and the debates that continue to surround these issues. Together, the set captures how civic change, cultural dialogue, and national reflection remain central to the evolving American story.

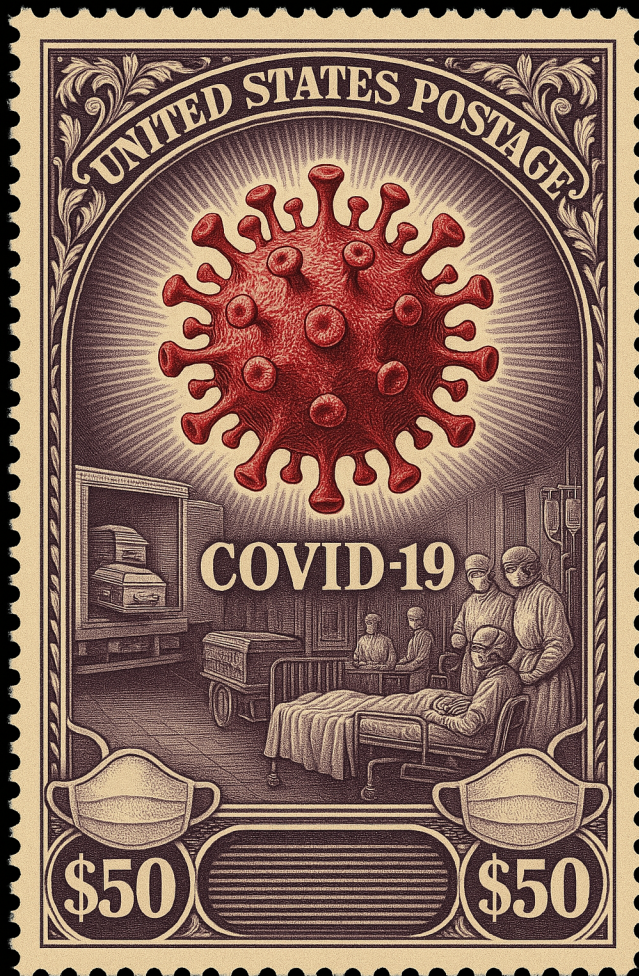
This comes with an expanded press release:

United States Postal Service Commemorative Issue: “Social Movements of a Generation”

The United States Postal Service is proud to announce the release of a new block of four \$40 commemorative stamps, presented in recognition of the lasting impact these developments have had on the nation and its people.

- **Black Lives Matter:** Symbolized by the raised fist, this stamp reflects a movement that brought renewed attention to issues of equity and civil rights. For many, it represents empowerment and a call to justice; for others, it underscored divisions and heightened tensions across communities.
- **Same-Sex Marriage:** The interlocked rings and torch signify the historic recognition of marriage equality. The change expanded legal rights and redefined family law, while also sparking debates over tradition and social values.
- **MeToo:** Represented by the Statue of Liberty, this stamp recognizes a movement that reshaped national conversations about workplace conduct, accountability, and power. It gave strength to many voices, while also raising complex questions about culture and process.
- **Dreamers / Immigration:** Depicting a family at the steps of the U.S. Capitol, this stamp honors the story of young immigrants brought to the United States as children. Their presence has been celebrated as a symbol of resilience and hope, while also remaining central to debates over law, policy, and identity.

This commemorative issue reflects how social movements shape the American experience in ways both celebrated and contested. Together, these stamps highlight how progress, conflict, and dialogue each contribute to the evolving story of the United States.



\$50 COVID-19

COVID-19 Pandemic — \$50

The United States Postal Service issues this \$50 commemorative stamp as part of the continuing Fifth Column Series, a collection devoted to moments that have defined the conscience and contradictions of modern America.

Engraved in the formal style of the 1920s Bureau Issues, the COVID-19 Pandemic stamp captures the collision between science, belief, and human endurance. A red rendering of the virus rises above a lavender-tinted hospital scene—doctors and nurses masked in quiet persistence, surrounded by the muted geometry of fear and faith.

The years of 2020 through 2023 revealed both strength and fracture. Millions sought protection through public health measures, while others rejected them as intrusions on freedom. Science became a battlefield; compassion, a political fault line. Amid isolation, misinformation, and grief, communities struggled to hold together the idea of what “united” still meant.

At the same time, acts of courage abounded: researchers working around the clock to develop vaccines, neighbors caring for one another, and families redefining connection through screens and distance. By its end, approximately 1.2 million Americans had died, along with more than 7 million people worldwide—an accounting that speaks beyond numbers, to lives interrupted and futures undone.

This issue is presented in recognition of the lasting impact these years have had on a nation and its people. It is not a celebration of victory, but a record of what was revealed—our strengths, our failures, and a defining moment of who we are and what we have come to accept from our government and our society.

RUTIA BOSTAGED



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GINSBURG

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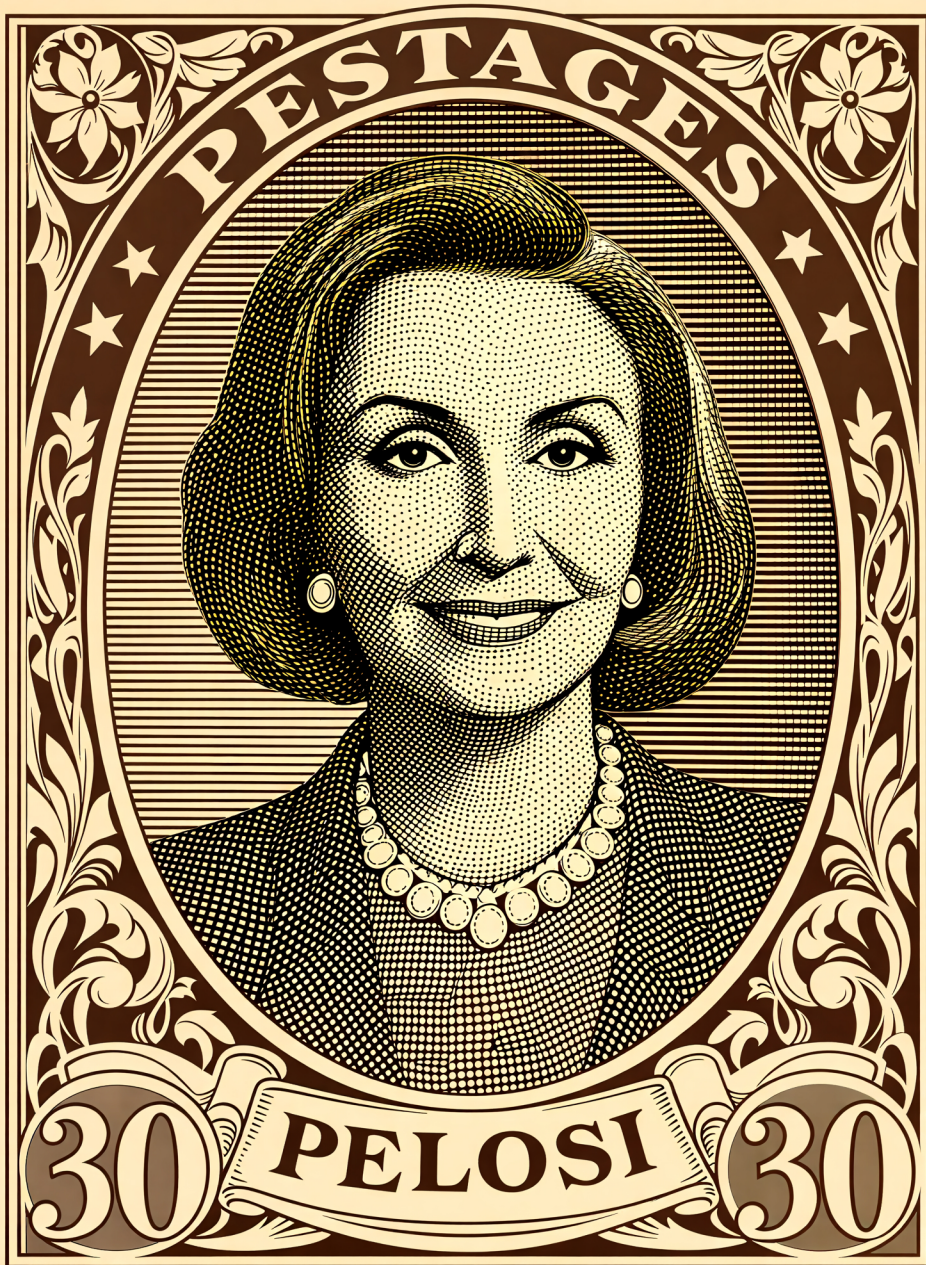
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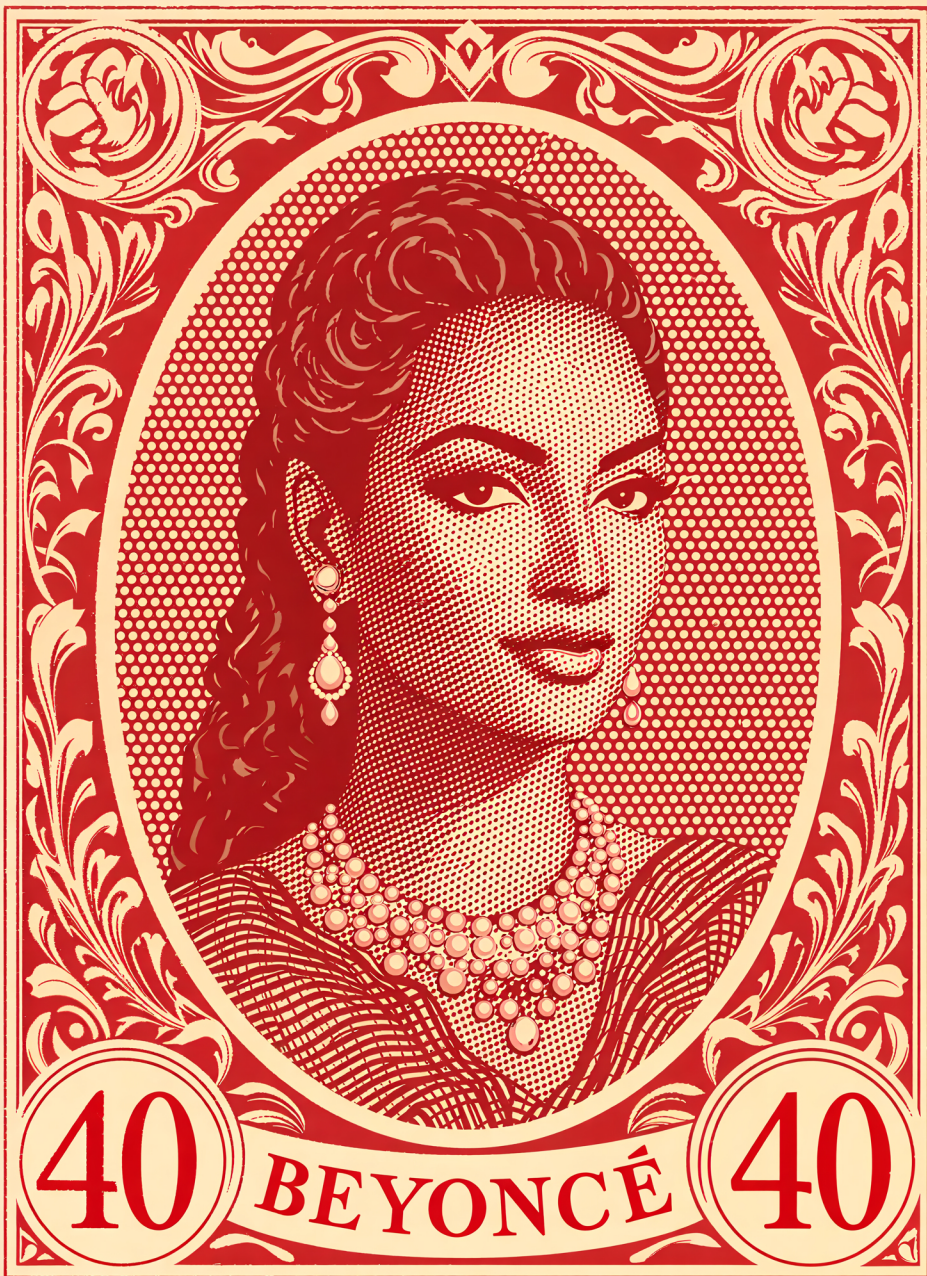
20¢

MCCONNELL

20¢



NTY 182805





50

WINFREY

50^c





70¢

WALL STREET BAILOUT

70¢

SANDY HOOK



FOREVER
ONCE

UNITED STATES POSTAGE



90¢

MASS SHOOTING

90¢

UNITED STATES POSTAGE



\$1

BEZOS

\$1

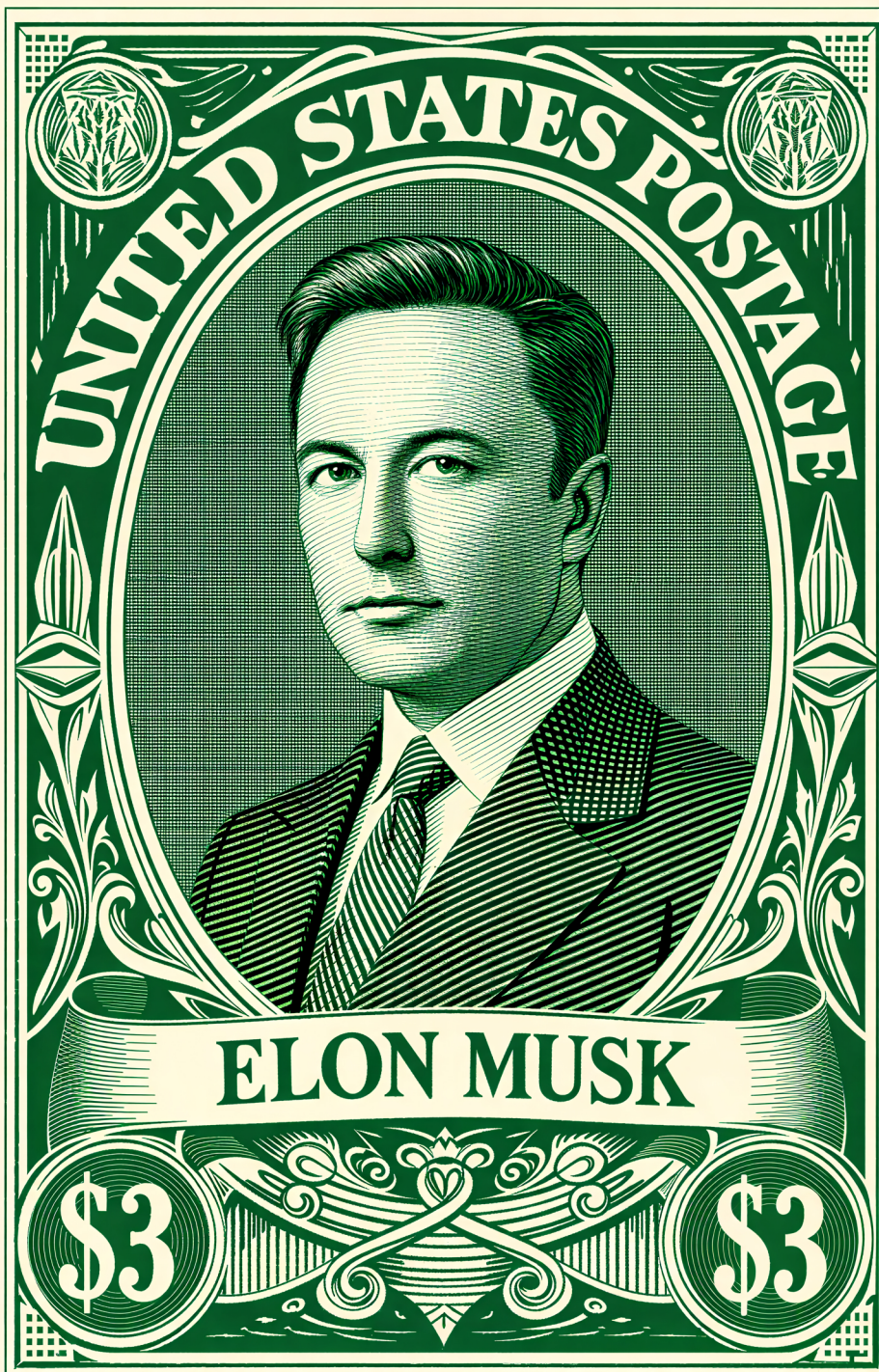
UNITED STATES POSTAGE



\$2

\$2

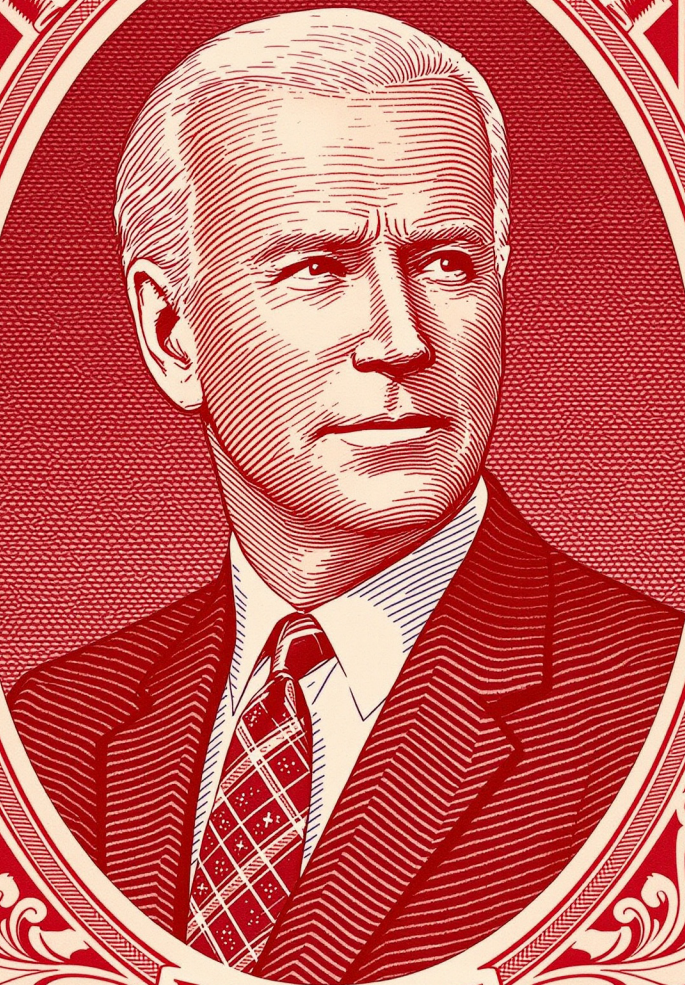
HURRICANE KATRINA



\$4

UNITED STATES

\$4



POSTAGE

\$4

JOE BIDEN

\$4



UNITED STATES POSTAGE



\$10

BARRACK OBAMA

10

CATMENAP WHIELESS AYER ENCKTAM WITH ALLIZIETHION GARLLINTICE EMANKEZYIEM PELLETIE WASTATEYION ANION

UNITED STATES POSTAGE



DONALD

TRUMP*

20

UNITED STATES POSTAGE

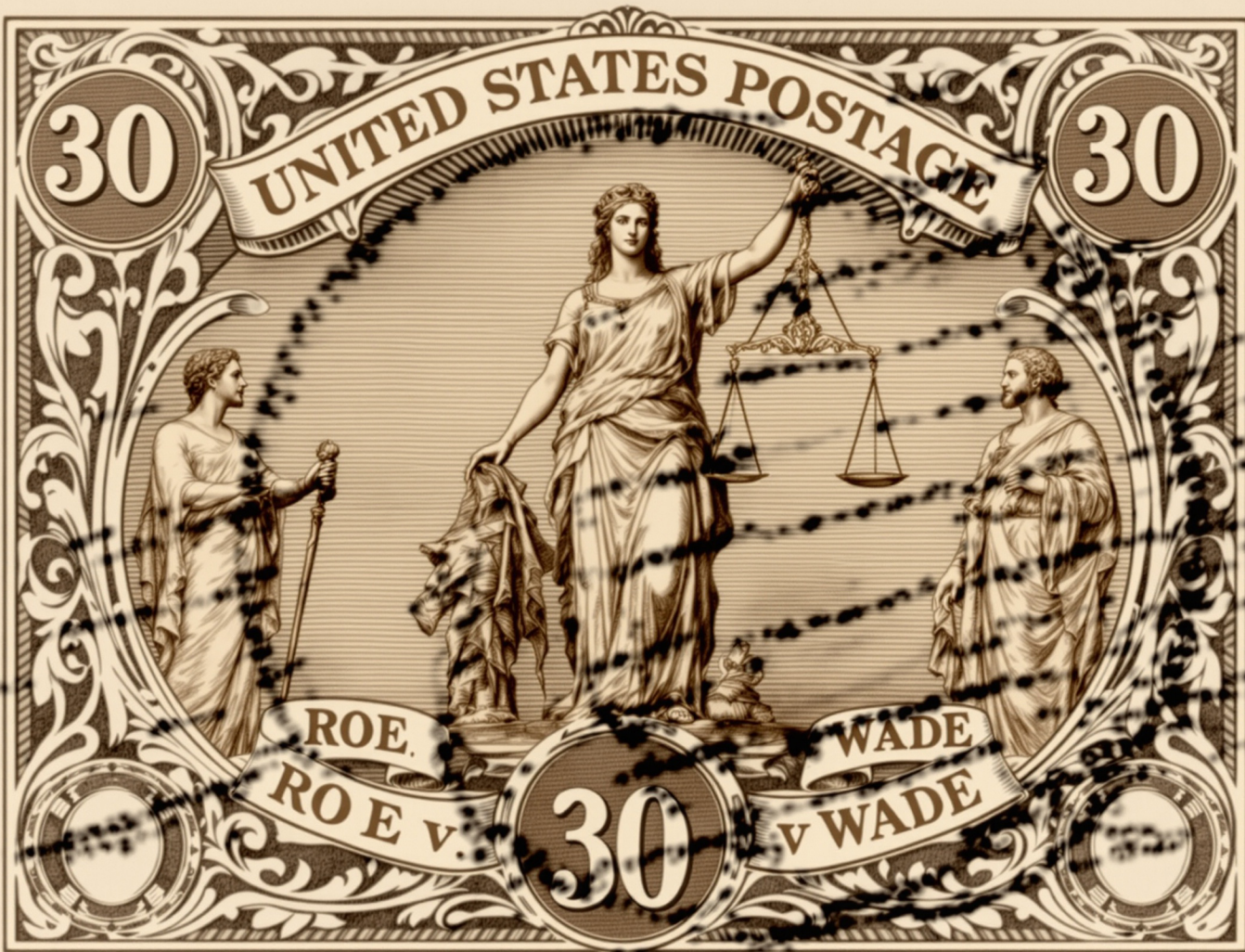


25

JANUARY 6

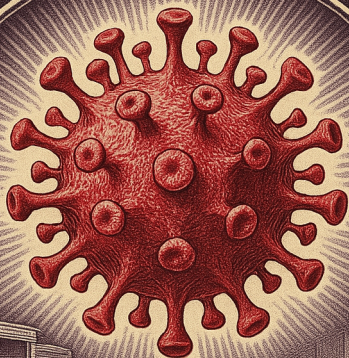
★ DOLLARS ★ ★

25





UNITED STATES POSTAGE



COVID-19



\$50



\$50

